UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

UNDP

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APPROVAL OF UNDP ASSISTANCE TO A PROJECT OF
COSTA RICA

IPF: (1987-1991) $ 5 589 000

(COS/91/003) - Strengthening of Community Self-Management in Human Settlements

Date of approval by the AC: 1/	23 October 1991
Expected duration:	Five years
Proposed executing agency:	UNHCS (HABITAT)
Government implementing agency:	Ministry of Housing and Human Settlements
Proposed UNDP contribution:	$ 100 000 Source of funds: IPF
Government cost-sharing:	$ 1 676 100
Total UNDP budget:	$ 1 776 100

Project background

34 percent population in Costa Rica is below the poverty line. The majority of the population in the selected human settlements survives on 20-30 percent less than the subsistence levels. The economic crisis and drastic reduction in cocoa plantations (60 percent) due to a plague has prompted migrations to the three largest cities, San Jose, Limon, and Puntarenas, which is rapidly increasing the demand for housing and urban services. The migrant population is settling in peri-urban areas on hillsides with few access routes, and lacking potable water, hygienic latrines and solid waste elimination systems. The settlements selected by the Government for the project lack educational, health, vocational training and recreational facilities. Particularly affected are women-heads of households and children, who have higher mortality rates than the national average. The informal economy in these settlements does not absorb the demand for employment, particularly by women-heads of households.

The Structural Adjustment Programme has restricted public sector investments in infrastructure and services. As a result, the Government's Development Programme includes an Emergency Social Plan to deal inter alia with this problem, for which a Social Commission has been set up to replicate integrated pilot projects carried out by various institutions.

There are Social Development Offices at the municipal level which use community organizations and grassroots organizations for free labour. However, these organizations lack resources and experience. NGOs have external resources for their pilot projects, but their sustainability is not assured beyond the duration of the projects. Subsequently, the Ministry of Housing and Human Settlements is reorganizing itself with support under the project (COS/88/004) National Housing. To strengthen its technical, administrative and financial capacity, address the needs of low-income communities, and develop sustainable programmes within the framework of the Global Housing Strategy, the Government requested UNDP assistance under the present approval.

1/ This Fact Sheet reflects the status of the project/revision at the time it was approved by the Action Committee; modifications to the project/revision may have occurred subsequently.

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Description of project

The long-term objective of the project is to strengthen the capacity of low-income communities in San Jose, Limon and Puntarenas to implement their own housing, services, and other community projects. The immediate objectives of the project are: (a) evaluate the availability of resources, labour, competence/capability, transport and raw materials; (b) devise replicable strategies for community administration; (c) train women-heads of households and youth with the aim of generating income for them as housing construction workers and administrators of community services; (d) train women to act as trainers of children and adults regarding environmental protection, community health and organization; (e) undertake housing construction, housing repair, waste disposal, maintenance of water supply and drainage, and administration of other natural resources of the communities; (f) prepare community members for income-generating activities; (g) provide support to grassroots organizations; (h) establish revolving funds for credit for housing construction and productive enterprises; (i) undertake marketing studies to establish the feasibility of small enterprises and the needs of women to run these enterprises; and (j) test system of waste recycling in the communities in terms of its income-generating potential.

Inputs

UNDP will provide a chief technical adviser (60 work-months), 12 international consultants (12 work-months), 15 national consultants; 20 subcontracts for construction and design of training programmes, group training and in-service training; equipment including four vehicles, personal computers, video cameras and accessories; and miscellaneous costs.

Financial Data

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Personnel	890 300
Subcontract	454 300
Training	281 000
Equipment	85 500
Miscellaneous	65 000
Total	1 776 100

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